

THE HONORABLE JOHN C. COUGHENOUR

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

ROBERT MEEKER, *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

STARFISH CHILDREN’S SERVICES, *et al.*,

Defendants.

CASE NO. C17-0376-JCC

ORDER

This matter comes before the Court on the parties’ stipulated motion to seal (Dkt. No. 79). The Court hereby GRANTS the motion for the reasons explained herein.

The Court starts from the position that “[t]here is a strong presumption of public access to [its] files.” W.D. Wash. Local Civ. R. 5(g). This presumption applies particularly to “dispositive pleadings.” *Kamakana v. City and Cty. of Honolulu*, 447 F.3d 1172, 1179 (9th Cir. 2006); *see also M.F. v. United States*, Case No. C13-1790-JLR, Dkt. No. 18 at 4 (W.D. Wash. 2013) (finding that a motion to approve a minor settlement agreement is a dispositive pleading). To overcome this presumption, there must be a “compelling reason” for sealing that is “sufficient to outweigh the public’s interest in disclosure.” *Id.*

The parties have a compelling reason to redact the monetary amount of their settlement agreement—both parties want the monetary amount to remain private and this is a purely private dispute. (*See* Dkt. No. 79.) Plaintiff wishes to maintain the confidentiality of the monetary

1 amount to avoid unwanted attention, and Defendants seek to maintain confidentiality to
2 discourage copycat litigants. (*Id.* at 4.) Most importantly, the settlement agreement is already
3 publicly available, with the exception of the monetary amount, which is redacted. (Dkt. No. 78-
4 1.) Therefore, the Court finds that there is compelling reason to seal the settlement agreement
5 that outweighs the public's interest in its full disclosure.

6 Therefore, the parties' motion to seal (Dkt. No. 79) is GRANTED. The Clerk is
7 DIRECTED to maintain Docket Number 80 under seal.

8 DATED this 18th day of July 2019.

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12 John C. Coughenour
13 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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